

March 13, 1950.

Dr. E. H. Fulling, Editor  
Botanical Review,  
New York Botanical Garden,  
New York 58, N.Y.

Dear Dr. Fulling:

Thank you for your consideration in inviting me to contribute a review article to Botanical Review, in the general field of the genetics of lower plants.

I would be strongly tempted to accept your invitation, except that I am convinced that a review in this field, or in any other in which I would be competent to make a contribution, is not so greatly needed at the present time, in view of the review articles that I, and several other workers, have published recently, or are about to publish. In support of this conclusion, may I cite the following titles, since the 1946 Cold Spring Harbor Symposium:

- Luria, S.E. (1947) Recent advances in bacterial genetics, Bact. Rev. 11: 1-40.  
Beadle, G.W. (1945--older than the stated deadline, but very comprehensive)  
Biochemical genetics. Chem. Rev. 37:15-96.  
Lederberg, J. (1948) Problems in microbial genetics, Heredity, 2:145-198.  
" " (1949) Bacterial Variation, Ann. Rev. Microbiology 3:1-22.  
Tatum, E.L. (1950 in press) Bacterial Variation, Ann. Rev. Micr. 4.  
Beadle, G.W. (1948) Physiological Genetics, Ann. Rev. Physiol. 10:17-42.  
Horowitz, N. (1950 in press) Biochemical Genetics of Neurospora.  
Advances in Genetics, 3:  
Lindgren, C.C. (1949). The Yeast Cell, Its Genetics and Cytology.  
" (1948). Genetics of the Fungi, Ann. Rev. Micr. 2.  
Spiegelman, S. (1948). Differentiation as the controlled production  
of unique enzymatic patterns. Symp. Soc. Exptl. Biol. 2:286-325.  
Symposium on Biochemical Genetics. The Biochemical Society (Gt. Britain).

This is only a partial list, and I am sure that I have missed some that I have heard about. In addition, a symposium or two is in the wind, so that in all, I have the feeling that the subject is covered at least quite well, if not already ad nauseam. As far as I know, any of my colleagues who would be in a position to contribute a review in this field shares my opinion.

If only in order to close on a constructive note, may I suggest an alternative topic for a review article, in a field where it is badly needed: the intimate effects of radiations on microorganisms. Radio-microbiology has received a tremendous impetus by recent experimental developments, and there is considerable need for a reevaluation in a critical review. I can think of no one better qualified to undertake such a critique, and who may be persuaded to do so, than Dr. James Watson, now at the Department of Bacteriology, Indiana University, Bloomington. As it happens, I have tried to convince Dr. Watson that he should write such an article, and have strong hopes that a formal invitation from so reputable a journal as the Botanical Review will incite him to do so.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg,  
Assistant Professor of Genetics